

Claims:

1. A method for operating a gaming apparatus, the gaming apparatus capable of
5 playing a game comprising a plurality of game pieces, the method comprising:

determining a first in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of a first set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of pieces in the first set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality;

displaying a first set of images corresponding to the first set of game pieces;

providing a first in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the first in-game outcome;

determining separately a game outcome for each game based on a configuration of the plurality of game pieces;

displaying a plurality of game piece images corresponding to the plurality of game pieces; and

determining a value payout based on the game outcome.

2. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the step of determining a first in-game outcome comprises the step of determining a first in-game outcome for each game based on a single game piece selected from the plurality of game pieces.

3. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

5 determining another in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of another set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of pieces in the another set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality and more than that in the first set of game pieces;

10 displaying another set of images corresponding to the another set of game pieces; and

15 providing another in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the another in-game outcome.

4. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the step of providing another in-game stimulation comprises providing a stimulation which is heightened relative to the first in-game stimulation.

20 5. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the steps of determining a first in-game outcome, determining another in-game outcome and determining a game outcome are performed before the step of displaying a first set of game piece images.

25 6. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising providing a second in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the first in-game outcome.

7. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the steps of providing a first in-game stimulation and of providing a second in-game stimulation are performed simultaneously.

5 8. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the steps of providing a first in-game stimulation and of providing a second in-game stimulation are performed sequentially.

9. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 6, further
10 comprising the step of combining the first in-game stimulation with the second in-game stimulation to provide a third stimulation

10. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing a first in-game stimulation comprises the steps of generating an
15 event and providing the event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the event.

11. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
20 step of providing a first in-game stimulation comprises generating a first event and a second event, combining the first event with the second event to generate a third event, and providing the third event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical
25 stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the third event that is different than would have been provided according to the first event or the second event.

12. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
30 step of determining a value payout comprises the step of determining a value payout based on a wager made by a player and the game outcome.

13. A method for operating a gaming apparatus, the gaming apparatus capable of playing a game comprising a plurality of game pieces, the method comprising:

displaying a plurality of spinning reel images;

5

determining a first in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of a first set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of game pieces in the first set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality of game pieces;

10

displaying a set of stopped reel images corresponding to the first set of game piece images;

providing a first in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the first in-game outcome;

15

determining separately a game outcome for each game based on a configuration of the plurality of game pieces;

20

displaying a plurality of stopped reel images corresponding to the plurality of game pieces; and

determining a value payout based on the game outcome.

25

14. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the step of determining a first in-game outcome comprises the step of determining a first in-game outcome for each game based on a single game piece selected from the plurality of game pieces.

30

15. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

5 determining another in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of another set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of pieces in the another set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality and more than that in the first set of game pieces;

10 displaying another set of stopped reel images corresponding to the another set of game pieces; and

15 providing another in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the another in-game outcome.

16. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the step of providing another in-game stimulation comprises providing a stimulation which is heightened relative to the first in-game stimulation.

20 17. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the steps of determining a first in-game outcome, determining another in-game outcome and determining a game outcome are performed before the step of displaying a first set of game piece images.

25 18. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising providing a second in-game stimulation selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation, a visual stimulation, a value stimulation and a physical stimulation according to the first in-game outcome.

30 19. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the steps of providing a first in-game stimulation and of providing a second in-game stimulation are performed simultaneously.

20. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the steps of providing a first in-game stimulation and of providing a second in-game stimulation are performed sequentially.

5

21. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 18, further comprising the step of combining the first in-game stimulation with the second in-game stimulation to provide a third stimulation

10

22. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the step of providing a first in-game stimulation comprises the steps of generating an event and providing the event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the event.

15

23. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the step of providing a first in-game stimulation comprises generating a first event and a second event, combining the first event with the second event to generate a third event, and providing the third event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the third event that is different than would have been provided according to the first event or the second event.

20

24. The method of operating a gaming apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the step of determining a value payout comprises the step of determining a value payout based on a wager made by a player and the game outcome.

25

25. A gaming apparatus capable of playing a game comprising a plurality of game pieces, the gaming apparatus comprising:

30

a display unit that is capable of generating video images;

at least one stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulation device, a visual stimulation device, a value payout device, and a physical stimulation device;

5 a controller operatively coupled to the display unit, the controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to the processor and programmed to:

determine a first in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of a first set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of pieces in the first set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality;

10

control the display unit to display a first set of images corresponding to the first set of game pieces;

15

control the at least one stimulator to provide a first in-game stimulation according to the first in-game outcome;

determine separately a game outcome for each game based on a configuration of the plurality of game pieces;

20

control the display unit to display a plurality of game piece images corresponding to the plurality of game pieces; and

determine a value payout based on the game outcome.

25 26. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller is programmed to determine a first in-game outcome by determining a first in-game outcome for each game based on a single game piece selected from the plurality of game pieces.

30 27. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller is also programmed to:

determine another in-game outcome for each game based on a configuration of another set of game pieces selected from the plurality of game pieces, the number of pieces in the another set of game pieces being less than that in the plurality and more than that in the first set of game pieces;

5

control the display unit to display another set of images corresponding to the another set of game pieces; and

10

control the at least one stimulator to provide another in-game stimulation according to the another in-game outcome.

28. The gaming apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the controller is programmed to heighten the another in-game stimulation relative to the first in-game stimulation.

15

29. The gaming apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the controller is programmed to determine the first in-game outcome, the another in-game outcome and the game outcome before controlling the display unit to display the first set of game piece images.

20

30. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller is programmed to control the at least one stimulator to provide a second in-game stimulation according to the first in-game outcome.

25

31. The gaming apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the controller is programmed to control the at least one stimulator to provide the first in-game stimulation and the second in-game stimulation simultaneously.

30

32. The gaming apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the controller is programmed to control the at least one stimulator to provide the first in-game stimulation and the second in-game stimulation sequentially.

33. The gaming apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the controller is programmed to combine the first in-game stimulation with the second in-game stimulation to provide a third stimulation

5

34. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller is programmed to provide a first in-game stimulation by generating an event and by providing the event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the event.

10

35. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller is programmed to provide a first in-game stimulation by generating a first event and a second event, by combining the first event with the second event to generate a third event, and by providing the third event to a first stimulator selected from the group consisting of a 3-dimensional aural stimulator, a visual stimulator, a physical stimulator, and a value stimulator, the stimulator providing a stimulation according to the third event that is different than would have been provided according to the first event or the second event.

15

20

36. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, the gaming apparatus further comprises a value input device and the controller is programmed to determine a value payout by determining a value payout based on a wager made by a player using the value input device and the game outcome.

25

37. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the visual stimulation device is selected from the group consisting of a display unit, a partitioned display unit, multiple display units, reels, top boxes, toppers, candles, light bezels, button lights and dispenser lights.

30

38. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the visual stimulation device comprises a peripheral device having lights and displays.

39. The gaming apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the payout device is selected from the group consisting of a coin hopper, a token hopper, a printer for printing merchandise ticket vouchers, bonus ticket vouchers, cash-redemption ticket vouchers, casino chip ticket vouchers, extra game play ticket vouchers, restaurant ticket vouchers, or show ticket vouchers, and an electronic funds transfer device.
40. The gaming apparatus according to claim 36, wherein the value input device is selected from the group consisting of a bill acceptor, a coin acceptor, a token acceptor, a card reader, a ticket reader, a coupon reader, a voucher reader and an electronic funds transfer device.
41. A gaming system comprising a plurality of gaming apparatuses as defined in claim 25, the gaming apparatuses being linked together to form a network selected from the group consisting of a LAN, a WAN, an intranet and the Internet.
42. The gaming system according to claim 41, wherein the gaming apparatuses are linked to a central controller.
43. The gaming system according to claim 41, wherein the gaming apparatuses are linked together to form a peer-to-peer network.